



January 20, 2017

Governor John Bel Edwards
Office of the Governor
PO Box 94004
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

RE: Lance Harris Budget Plan

Dear Governor:

According to a recent press release it has been reported that a budget plan by State Representative Lance Harris to make current fiscal year cuts would include the Louisiana Department of Health to be cut by \$147,156,472.

I have been informed that this cut could defund all of the public-private partnerships and eliminate waiver programs, among other critical health care programs. In addition, LDH has already calculated that the cuts would cause loss of matching federal funds such that the total fiscal impact of Representative Harris' proposed cuts on LDH would be \$423,000,000.

I write today to you as a leader at one of Louisiana's Federally Qualified Health Centers who is proud to help you lead the charge to expand Medicaid in Louisiana, a move that saved the state money this year and more importantly will continue to have exponential returns as far as costs and healthcare outcomes for years to come if it remains in place. Although we do not receive a state allocation in the budget, we are very concerned about the impact to healthcare delivery that will be caused by Representative Harris' proposed cuts.

The State of Louisiana just moved from 50th to 49th in overall health outcomes. But if our patients lose access to area hospitals and specialty care services that we depend on because the public private partnerships dissolve, we'll be right back in last place. And, worse yet, our patients' health will suffer. Some will die.

I do appreciate how tough the current state budget situation is, but I write today on behalf of the 22,000 patients that we provide much needed primary healthcare services to each year, for the Louisiana Legislature to seek a solution-driven alternative for balancing the state's budget that considers the lives and well-being of our patients.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tommie Anderson".

Tommie Anderson
Chief Executive Officer